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1982 HANDBOOK FOR COLLEGE PLANNING

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The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics

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TO THE STUDENT CONSIDERING COLLEGE:

In any decision-making process, gathering information is a key step. Choosing a college is no different. To make a good choice, one must examine the opportunities which are available. Today, there are over two thousand five hundred colleges and universities in this country. What are the characteristics by which one can discriminate between these many choices? Fortunately, much research has already been done which allows individuals to differentiate between institutions. In our college library (located in the Guidance Office), there is literature--handbooks and college guides--from which one can get information concerning the location, size, special qualities of curricula and cost (beware here: nationwide tuition costs have risen by 13% just this year and the general guidebooks are likely to reflect costs for the current academic year).

The Guidance library is a good place to begin. Don't be overwhelmed by the volume of information before you, by the great number of possible choices. It is a good idea to begin with a broad view of the options available. Do not be confined to one or two familiar schools. Gradually the choices can be narrowed based on individual interests and needs. One should spend a few days of unrestricted browsing in the Guidance college library. Here, in addition to the general guidebooks, the individual catalogues of most of the selective colleges and universities are found. Some good resources which can be used as starting points are listed in the bibliography. In using these resources, one should begin with the general and move to the specific.

What are these determining specifics? Because the process of selecting a college is very personal, it must begin with self-reflection and evaluation. You must consider many things about yourself. Goals, strengths, weaknesses, values and lifestyle preferences and reasons for going to college are but a few of the factors that you should consider. In the admissions process, however, personal insight, an understanding of self and one's direction--academically and professionally--can be a key factor in the final admissions decisions. Your thinking at this initial stage of research and planning can be very useful when you actually reach the time for applying to colleges and universities. A good idea is to keep a notebook of insights of goals and objectives as well as notes on individual colleges and universities. This journal will be very helpful when sitting down to apply for admission to colleges and for scholarship assistance.

As a student at The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, you have already left home and become involved in a residential education experience. Because of this, "going away to college" will not likely be the wrenching emotional event that it is for most college freshmen. Still, you need to remember that choosing a college is, in essence, choosing a home for the next several years. A college may seem to have all of the obvious things you're looking for--the right courses and faculty--but if you're not going to feel happy there, it is not a good choice. To discern that elusive quality that is going to make a particular college the learning environment that is right for you is a serious task. Don't do it in a rush. Take your time. Think much about yourself. Browse through the library resources. Talk with the NCSSM college counselor, your parents,

local alumni of various colleges and universities, friends (just remember that the views of some people may be based on out-of-date stereotypes or secondhand information), college admissions representatives, teachers. As in all learning, the information will sift and filter into those personally constructed categories and slowly it will begin making more sense; you will begin to have a better understanding of what you want.

The College Visit

If at all possible, begin visiting colleges. Try to do this over a period of time, not all at once. Probably spring and summer after your junior year are the best times for these visits. By August, admissions offices are incredibly busy again. Talk with the admissions people; take a campus tour. Find an appealing spot on campus, sit down, and imagine yourself actually living and learning in such an environment. How does it feel? The importance of such a visit cannot be overemphasized. The time and expense involved are an investment in your future. If cost is a prohibitive factor in actually making these visits, talk with the NCSSM college counselor about alternatives. Once again, a visit can help a great deal in determining your happiness and satisfaction with the academic and physical environment of an institution.

Involving Your Parent(s) In The Selection Process

What about your parents' involvement in your college selection? If you're lucky, your parents won't direct you toward a predetermined goal, but will work with you, talk with you, help you discover what you are looking for, encourage you to be thoughtful and thorough in your investigating and decision-making. Don't turn a deaf ear to your parents' suggestions.

After all, they know you pretty well. Try to see them as the valuable resource that they are and discuss openly with them any objections you have to their suggestions. Ultimately, it is you who must make the decision and live with the final choice.

Evaluating Yourself

Now that you've done all this investigating and ruminating and have come up with several colleges that really appeal to you, the next step is the application.

But wait a minute! Suppose they don't want you? Every potential applicant has that seed of fear in his heart--the possibility that you are, after all, unacceptable. If you have made an honest assessment of your school record, your test scores, your achievement (and they fall within the range indicated as acceptable to the college you're interested in), then your chances are pretty good. Some other factors may have weight. The college may be seeking greater geographical coverage or racial or ethnic balance. If your enrollment can contribute to these goals of the college, then you may have a fortunate advantage. You won't be more likely to get in if you are not generally acceptable, but when there are too many acceptable applicants in the pool, you may be more likely to float to the top.

When students don't apply to a college which they are really interested in attending, it is usually for either of two reasons, sometimes both: (1) they underestimate their own credentials (as discussed above) or (2) they believe they can't afford it.

College Costs/Financial Assistance

What about paying for college? All admissions representatives tell high school counselors that a student should never be discouraged from applying because he cannot afford it. Applications are judged by many admissions offices without any regard for, or even any knowledge of, their parents' ability to pay tuition and other costs. Some schools automatically consider all applicants for financial aid, including scholarships. If a student is deemed desirable and is admitted, the college or university makes every effort--through job opportunities, loans, and scholarships--to make attendance possible.

These days we read much about tight money in federal loan programs for students. The intricacies of eligibility for loans, interests rates and fees cannot be adequately covered in this brief paper. There are excellent resources in the NCSSM college library (see attached bibliography) and in most public and secondary school libraries. The August 23, 1981 issue of The New York Times carried a very good article on the current situation for these students and their families who are seeking federal loans. The library has posted a copy of the article. Of course, the very best resource for information is the financial aid office of the particular college in which you are interested. The financial aid situation for the 1982-83 academic year is, however, not nearly as dismal as some had predicted that it might be. The Pell Grants (formerly the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants) were only cut by four percent (forty percent was expected). The same is true for the National Direct Student Loan Program and the College Work-Study Program. The Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program was cut by twenty-five percent, but

there is pending legislation which could reduce the cuts to four percent. College costs do continue to rise annually. With the cuts in the established federal programs, students are going to have to begin to look harder and more carefully at the possibility of scholarships and grants available at individual institutions.

Suggestions on Seeking Financial Aid

Carefully complete and submit the College Scholarship Service's Financial Aid Form (FAF). This form (1983-84 edition) will be available in the Guidance Office after January 5 or you may write to the College Scholarship Service (CSS) at the following address:

College Scholarship Service Box 2700 Princeton, NJ 08541
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The CSS forwards data on your family's financial situation (taken directly from the FAF) to the varied sources from which you may receive aid--the federal government, the various colleges, the state as well as private institutions. It is the most complete process for applying for financial aid because it allows the college or university to provide a "package" for your financial assistance by combining federal loan money, work-study, scholarships or grants. You should fill in ALL items on the FAF. DO NOT OMIT ANYTHING OR THE PROCESS WILL BE SLOWED DOWN CONSIDERABLY. An omission could cost you a portion of or all of your financial aid package. Many college financial aid offices allocate available funds to the first students whose applications are complete and who are eligible for assistance.

During our Invitational College Day on OCTOBER 30, there will be a financial aid workshop for seniors and their parents. Several financial aid professionals will be present to help clarify the current situation, the application process and to help with any questions students and parents may have.*

Some parents refuse to apply for financial aid. They don't like the idea of reporting their income and being evaluated by an impersonal agency. They declare that they can send their child to school without "help" from anyone. Applying for aid is certainly a parent's choice, but such a decision can have a significant effect on the student's choice of college and should be made with careful consideration of what sacrifice it may require of the ambitious student.

As mentioned earlier, beyond the self-help programs for students (loans, work-study) there are scholarships. These highly desirable grants are few and far between and competition for them is stiff, indeed. Some scholarships are awarded on the basis of achievement in a specific field and some because of the generally outstanding quality of a student's work. Some scholarships are awarded without regard for financial need and some are awarded on the basis of demonstrated financial need. There are also a large number of scholarships awarded to cousins of nephews of bombardiers wounded in the Battle of the Bulge and the like. Again, resources for learning about these various scholarships are shelved in the college library. I suggest that you also check with organizations

*NOTE: Most financial aid applications require a copy of the federal income tax form(s) filed by the family and/or student as substantiation of data received through the FAF. It might be helpful for senior parents to bring a copy of their IRS tax form for the previous tax year to the workshop.

and clubs in your home community. We have also developed a vertical file with information about scholarships which have been sent to us by various organizations. Some good resources for a thorough scholarship search are listed in the attached bibliography.

A student seeking a scholarship needs to maintain an excellent school record, participate in a well-rounded co-curricular program and aggressively investigate resources for scholarships.

The NCSSM College/Scholarship Application Process

The following are varied notes relating to the college/scholarship application process at NCSSM:

A. Applications

The student is responsible for obtaining application forms. The NCSSM Guidance Office will not be responsible for supplying students with any college applications. However, the Guidance Office will be glad to provide students with addresses and telephone numbers of colleges and universities to which they express an interest. College addresses are also easily found in the catalogues and general guides which are available in the Guidance Office.

B. Application Process

1. Student's Responsibility

- a. The student is responsible for completing each application. College admissions counselors form initial impressions about candidates when they read applications. Like the rest of us, they are influenced by first impressions. Carefully read all directions before

attempting to complete the necessary forms. It is wise to xerox the original and use the copy for your first draft. You should type (preferably) or print very clearly and neatly in black ink the application you submit. If you have problems with the application, the College Planning Coordinator is here to help you. Carefully check your work and bring this first draft to the Guidance Office to be reviewed. Remember, first impressions are very important in the admissions process and the quality and appearance of your completed application is noticed and evaluated by the admissions personnel.

- b. Remember. Attach a check or money order to cover the application processing fee to the completed application. Address and stamp an envelope (unless the college itself provides a special envelope) and send these to the college or university admissions office. You should work out a system with your parents for paying application fees (whether checks will be written by your parents and given to you for mailing or if you have your own checking account, make sure the funds are available for this purpose). Many colleges and universities will not begin to process an application until the fee is received. If the total fees present a financial hardship, please see the NCSSM college counselor about considering alternative arrangements with individual colleges and universities.

- c. The student is also responsible for providing colleges, universities and many times scholarship sources with a copy of the high school record. Requests for transcripts are handled by the Registrar's Office. Transcripts will not be released to any source unless you have completed a transcript request form which you may obtain from the Registrar's Office. This form will require your social security number and a full address, including zip code, for each transcript request. Three to five days will be required to process a transcript. You will be notified via student mail of the date your transcript was sent to the address requested.
- d. Notify the Guidance Office of acceptances and your decision as to the college you will attend.

2. Responsibility of the College Planning Coordinator

The College Planning Coordinator will be responsible for completing the Secondary School Report (counselor's recommendation portion of the application). This report will be sent by the Guidance Office to each institution to which you are applying. You are responsible for the completion and mailing of all other portions of the application. The College Planning Coordinator will be available for advisement about the completion of forms, but the ultimate responsibility falls on you, the student.

C. Counseling Services

The College Counseling Program is designed to provide the following services:

1. Guidance. It is our wish to help you in making your college choice--not to direct you. Through our discussions, we will hope to raise thoughtful questions, initiate self-assessment, encourage a thorough search through the college resources available to you. Ultimate responsibility to do these things and to make decisions remains with you, the prospective college student.
2. Information Collection, Organization and Dissemination. The Guidance Office is a resource room for information. Our bibliography indicates the extent of the collection. At regularly scheduled guidance sessions and in individual conferences, information is relayed to the student as to how to locate and make use of information which is available. We are here to guide you through the decision-making and application process, not to give out a myriad of facts specific to individual institutions. We assume that students such as those at NCSSM are able to make use of the resources provided in the college library. Parents, too, should expect their children to accept such responsibility.
3. Application Processing. The Guidance Office accepts responsibility for completing the school's portion of the application and the following:
 - a. NCSSM School Profile
 - b. Counselor's Recommendation.

4. Public Relations/NCSSM and College Articulation

- a. The Guidance Office schedules the campus visits of college representatives and arranges for interested students to speak with the representatives.
- b. The Guidance Office plans the Invitational College Day activities to give an opportunity for students, parents and college representatives to meet. This event will take place on the last Saturday in October and run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- c. The Guidance Office makes a special effort to acquaint colleges and universities with the character of NCSSM and to promote their interest in our students.
- d. The Guidance Office provides information on registration for standardized testing essential to the college admission process and counsel on the interpretation of student scores.

A FINAL NOTE: Your education will be the central focus of your life for years to come. It will require a tremendous investment of time, hard work and money. Choose carefully where and how you will spend such precious resources.

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: ALL STUDENTS

FROM: Guidance Department

SUBJECT: STANDARDIZED TESTS RELATED TO
COLLEGE ADMISSIONS AND PLACEMENT

A. SHOULD I TAKE COLLEGE BOARD EXAMINATIONS?

College Board examinations, including the SAT and the Achievement Tests (ACH) are required for admission at most colleges. Students should check carefully the admissions requirements at prospective colleges to determine (1) whether SAT or ACH tests are required, or (2) if the prospective colleges require the ACT (American College Test). Some schools will accept ACT in lieu of SAT--mostly midwestern schools.

We recommend that anyone planning for the SAT and achievements in the junior year should take the SAT in March or April and the Achievements in either May or June.

A senior whose SAT score meets the requirement of colleges to which he is applying does not need to take the SAT again.

B. WHAT ARE ACHIEVEMENT TESTS?

Achievement Tests are one-hour examinations which measure the student's level of achievement in certain subject areas. Some colleges require or recommend three Achievements for admission and/or placement purposes.

C. HOW DO I KNOW WHAT ACHIEVEMENT TESTS TO TAKE?

Check the college catalogues of the institutions to which you are applying to learn of specific achievement tests required by each institution. You should take Achievements in those subject area sequences which you are completing this year and in any one-year subject which you will want to offer in your college admission credentials. For instance, if you are finishing your study of a foreign language, you would take the Achievement test this year rather than delay it until your senior year, when you will no longer be studying the subject. Also, a junior who is currently taking chemistry or a similar one-year course and wishes to offer this test for college admission should take the Achievement test either in May or June of this year.

If you plan on being an Early Decision candidate at a particular college, you should check to be sure you satisfy its testing requirements for admission.

REMEMBER: The English Composition Test with ESSAY is offered only at the December administration.

D. WHICH MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT TEST SHOULD I TAKE?

The math instructor will advise the student of the level of Math Achievement test to take.

E. WHEN DO I TAKE THE ACHIEVEMENT TESTS?

You will take Achievement Tests at the end of your study sequence of the given subject and in sufficient time to meet the admission requirements of the institution in which you are interested. Check the college catalogue.

The Guidance Department suggests that you take Achievement Tests ONLY in those areas of study which you WILL NOT continue next year. An Early Decision candidate, however, must take three tests if the college of his/her choice requires them.

F. SHOULD I REPEAT THE SAT IF I DO NOT DO WELL IN MY JUNIOR YEAR?

Ordinarily, there is no need for a student to take the SAT more than twice unless he must do so to meet the requirements of a specific college or if his SAT scores seem low and inconsistent with his academic record. Then he may wish to repeat the test. Discuss this question individually with the College Planning Coordinator if you are uneasy about your test scores.

REMEMBER: In assessing your application, colleges consider your highest scores earned to date.

So that the College Board may keep all of your records in order and report your scores to the colleges you designate, be sure to give your name EXACTLY THE SAME WAY on all College Board forms and in all communications with the Board. Using initials one time and not the next may cause confusion and your scores may not be reported.

Keep an account of your registration number on each testing date. This will be most helpful if you have to contact the Board at a later date.

NAME AS USED ON THE COLLEGE BOARD FORM _____ SAT
 REGISTRATION NUMBER _____ DATE OF TEST _____ ACH
 _____ SAT
 _____ ACH
 _____ SAT
 _____ ACH

REQUESTED SCORES BE SENT TO _____

G. WHAT ARE ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS?

Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations are given each May at NCSSM to those students enrolled in an Advanced Placement course who elect to take the exam. The exam measures what you have learned in a college level course. Once enrolled in college, a student who achieves an acceptable score on the test can receive college credit and/or advanced placement. The 1982-83 test will cost \$43.00* per test. Fee waivers are available for low income applicants. Scoring well on the tests is "money in the bank" as students may graduate ahead of schedule through advanced placement by entering college with sophomore standing. Advanced Placement test results play no part in determining a student's admissability to a particular college. However, being enrolled in an Advanced Placement course and doing well indicates your ability to handle difficult college-level material.

H. WHAT IS THE PSAT/NMSQT?

The PSAT/NMSQT is given each October at NCSSM. This test serves as a practice for the SAT to be taken in the spring of the junior year and as a qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program. Complete information on the National Merit Program will be provided to students prior to registration for the test. In addition, the test is the qualifying instrument for the National Achievement Scholarship for Outstanding Negro Students. Students who wish to participate in either competition must take the test on TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1982. Students who take the PSAT also have the opportunity to be included in the College Board's Student Search Service. The test costs \$4.25.

*based on 1981-82 costs

A TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE PLANNING

Junior Year

- _____ 1. Examine the educational opportunities available.
- _____ 2. Study college admission requirements
- _____ 3. Discuss plans with your parents.
- _____ 4. Meet with your counselor.
- _____ 5. Register for and take PSAT in October.
- _____ 6. Set up a calendar for taking tests and completing college applications.
- _____ 7. Examine financial resources with your family and review plans for financial aid.
- _____ 8. Consider people to ask for recommendations--teachers, employers, etc.
- _____ 9. Visit college campuses, talk to graduates and students at the schools being considered and read thoroughly the college catalogues (spring or early summer).
- _____ 10. Register for and take the SAT in the spring and the Achievement Tests as recommended in the attached discussion of standardized tests.

Senior YearDuring July, August, September

- _____ 1. Write colleges in which you are truly interested requesting applications, catalogues and financial aid information. Ask specifically for information on scholarships awarded through the institution or for students attending that particular college.
- _____ 2. Record progress in fulfilling application requirements.
- _____ 3. Maintain or improve academic grades during senior year. Colleges look unfavorably upon low grades during the twelfth grade.
- _____ 4. Request transcripts to be sent (through the Registrar's Office).

During October, November

- _____ 1. See your counselor when you have questions and need help. Initiate the conference. Don't wait for the counselor to call you in.

- _____ 2. Be certain of meeting deadline for Early Decision if you are applying for such early consideration.
- _____ 3. Have your counselor check your application forms.
- _____ 4. Complete forms and mail to the college or university along with a check for the application fee.
- _____ 5. Give the school's recommendation form to your counselor.
- _____ 6. Take all required tests. Note deadlines for registration.
- _____ 7. Meet with college representatives at the Invitational College Day on October 30 or when they visit NCSSM.

During December

- _____ 1. All applications and a transcript should be sent to the colleges by the end of the month, unless a college states otherwise.
- _____ 2. Please give the counselor the secondary school report (recommendation) portion of the application at least two weeks before it is due. The fall is a very busy time for counselors.
- _____ 3. Colleges will notify Early Decision applicants. Have other applications ready to go in case you don't make it. Some colleges don't restrict applicants for early decision. However, you should check the catalogues.
- _____ 4. If a mid-year grade report form has been provided by the college, submit it to the Registrar's Office before departing for the holiday.

During January

- _____ 1. Fill out the Financial Aid Form (FAF) with your family and submit it to the College Scholarship Service.
- _____ 2. Some colleges offer tentative acceptance to outstanding candidates during this month.

During February

- _____ 1. The Registrar will send first semester grades to the colleges. If there has been any change in the colleges to which you are applying, you must inform the Registrar.
- _____ 2. Double check to be sure that you have taken the proper tests, especially if Achievement Tests are required by any college to which you applied.

During March, April, May, June

- _____ 1. Keep track of acceptances, rejections, and awards of financial aid. Use the College Admissions Checklist provided and keep it up to date.
- _____ 2. Reply promptly to colleges asking you to notify them of your decision.*
- _____ 3. Send deposit to selected school as requested.

RECOMMENDED RECORDS TO KEEP IN YOUR COLLEGE PLANNING FILE

- 1. Test registration numbers (printed on the admission ticket/s).
- 2. Student Descriptive Questionnaire responses.
- 3. All score reports.
- 4. A list of courses you have taken in high school and grades received.
- 5. The work copy of the Financial Aid Form (FAF).
- 6. The College Scholarship Service (CSS) acknowledge form.
- 7. Copies of all correspondence sent to or received from schools.
- 8. Cancelled checks or money orders.
- 9. Admission tickets to tests and correction forms (in case you need to make a correction up to the day of the test).

*REMEMBER: MEET DEADLINES OR YOU MAY WELL LOSE THE ACCEPTANCE YOU HAVE GAINED!

PURSuing THE TASSLE
IS WORTH THE HASSLE

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

Use this convenient check list to remind yourself of individual college admissions requirements and to record the progress of your application procedures.

	1		2		3		4	
	Registration Deadline	Testing Date	Registration Deadline	Testing Date	Registration Deadline	Testing Date	Registration Deadline	Testing Date
COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY								
INSTITUTION'S ADDRESS								
CATALOGUE STUDIED THOROUGHLY								
ACCEPTABLE TEST SCORES FOR ADMISSION								
APPLICATION DEADLINE								
APPLICATION FEE								
PSAT/NMSQT								
SAT								
ACT								
REQUIRED TESTS								
ACHIEVEMENTS								
1								
2								
3								
HIGH SCHOOL COURSE REQUIREMENTS FULFILLED								
PERSONAL INTERVIEW REQUIRED								
INTERVIEW APPOINTMENT REQUESTED								
INTERVIEW DATE								
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS PREPARED								

REFERENCES REQUIRED				
NAMES ADDRESSES OF REFERENCES				
REFERENCES COMPLETED AND MAILED				
SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT (COUNSELOR'S RECOMMENDATION) SUB- MITTED TO GUIDANCE			Date	Date
APPLICATION COMPLETED AND MAILED (NOTIFY GUIDANCE OFFICE)				
TRANSCRIPT REQUESTED FROM REGISTRAR				
COLLEGE REPLY DATE				
FINANCIAL AID DEADLINE				
FINANCIAL INTERVIEW REQUIRED				
CSS Financial Statement				
ACT Financial Statement				
SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED BY INSTITUTION				

TESTING CALENDAR

1982-83

TEST	TEST DATE	REGISTRATION CLOSES	LATE REGISTRATION	FEE
SAT (ONLY)	OCT 16	SEPT 24	SEPT 25	\$10.50
PSAT/NMSQT	OCT 19	SEPT 21		\$ 4.25
ACT	OCT 30	OCT 1		\$ 9.50
SAT ACH	NOV 6	OCT 1	OCT 13	\$10.50
SAT ACH	DEC 4	OCT 29	NOV 10	\$10.50
ACT	DEC 11	NOV 12		\$9.50
SAT ACH	JAN 22	DEC 17	DEC 29	\$10.00
ACT	FEB 12	JAN 14		\$ 9.50
SAT (ONLY)	MAR 19	FEB 11	FEB 23	\$10.50
ACT	APR 16	MAR 18		\$ 9.50
SAT ACH	MAY 7	APR 1	APR 13	\$10.50
AP	MAY 16-20	*		\$43.00**
SAT ACH	JUNE 4	APR 29	MAY 11	\$10.50
ACT	JUN 11	MAY 13		\$ 9.50

*Date to be set by the Academic Dean's Office

**Based on 1981-82 figures

REGISTRATION FORMS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING OFFICES:

PSAT/NMSQT, SAT and ACH - Guidance Office

AP - Academic Dean's Office

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